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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC No. 06677-84
28 November 1984

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: George Kolt
National Intelligence Officer for Europe

Fritz Ermarth
National Intelligence Officer for USSR

SUBJECT: World War II Victory Celebrations

1. The Fortieth Anniversary of the end of World War II will be celebrated in May 1985. There will be pressures on the US government to participate in some commemorative activities:

- Veteran groups will undoubtedly take part in some ceremonies.
- Our NATO allies, with the exception of Germany, will be marking the occasion.
- The Soviets will want to take full credit for the victory and our Embassy in the GDR has already suggested that we counter this propaganda effort by participating in some joint commemorations.

2. But the US faces some dilemmas about the extent and nature of its participation:

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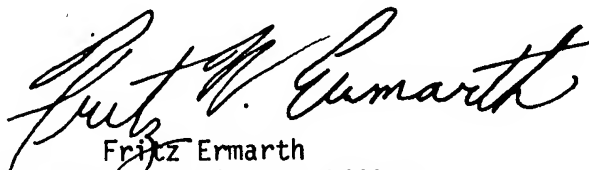
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- It will be impossible for us not to participate in some activities (especially those organized by veterans' groups) but we do not want to do so in a way that offends the West Germans and humiliates the Kohl government (as happened during the Normandy celebrations in June 1984).
- We do not want to let the Soviets claim all the glory for the victory, but at the same time we do not want to be drawn into ceremonies that create illusions and expectations about our relations with the USSR today.
- We want to pay homage to the sacrifices of the Russian people during the war so as to speak to them directly over their government but we must do so at a time when we are still boycotting official Red Army ceremonies in protest against Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

3. The actual extent and nuances of US official participation will inevitably be influenced by the kind of progress we are making in arms control by spring (it is unlikely to be much) and by the tenor of US-Soviet relations at that time. Overall we have to appreciate that the whole celebration is intended by the Soviets as an outburst of "new Soviet patriotism" in support of the leadership, the party, and the system. It will inevitably be used to propagandize against US policies Moscow dislikes. To counter this, we should insist on uncensored channels for addressing Soviet audiences as a quid for US participation in any joint ceremonies.

4. If we are to draw some benefits from the World War II victory celebrations and avoid at least the worse pitfalls it seems essential that we do some advanced planning. Two themes around which our activities might be organized are the paying of homage to the men who fought in World War II and the rededication of ourselves and all participants to maintaining the peace in Europe today and in the future.


Fritz Ermarth
National Intelligence Officer
for
USSR


George Kolt
National Intelligence Officer
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MEMORANDUM FOR: DCI
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FROM: NIO/EUR
NIO/USSR

SUBJECT: World War II Victory Celebrations

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